

Message Two
**Crucial Aspects of Living in the Good Land
after Returning from Captivity in Babylon**

RK *Hymns*: 124, 783 (tune 769)

Scripture Reading: 1 Chron. 4:10; 9:1; 16:8-12, 16-18; 29:10-20;
2 Chron. 20:15-22; 36:22-23

- 1 Chron 4:10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, Oh that You would richly bless me and enlarge my border, and that Your hand would be with me, and that You would so keep me from evil that it would not grieve me! And God caused what he had requested to come to pass.
- 1 Chron 9:1 So all Israel was enrolled by genealogy, and they are now written in the book of the kings of Israel; and Judah was carried away captive to Babylon for their unfaithfulness.
- 1 Chron 16:8 Give thanks to Jehovah; call upon His name; / Make known His deeds among the peoples.
- 1 Chron 16:9 Sing to Him; sing psalms to Him; / Muse upon all His wondrous deeds.
- 1 Chron 16:10 Glory in His holy name; / Let the heart of those who seek Jehovah rejoice.
- 1 Chron 16:11 Seek Jehovah and His strength; / Seek His face continually.
- 1 Chron 16:12 Remember His wondrous deeds, which He has done, / His signs and the judgments of His mouth,
- 1 Chron 16:16 The covenant that He made with Abraham, / And His oath unto Isaac.
- 1 Chron 16:17 And He confirmed it unto Jacob as a statute, / Unto Israel as an eternal covenant,
- 1 Chron 16:18 Saying, To you I will give the land of Canaan, / The portion of your inheritance;
- 1 Chron 29:10 And David blessed Jehovah in the sight of all the assembly. And David said, You are blessed, O Jehovah, God of Israel, our father, from eternity to eternity.
- 1 Chron 29:11 Yours, O Jehovah, is the greatness and the power and the splendor and the victory and the majesty, indeed all that is in heaven and on earth; Yours, O Jehovah, is the kingdom, and You are exalted as Head over all.
- 1 Chron 29:12 Both riches and glory proceed from You, and You rule over all. In Your hand are power and might, and it is in Your hand to make great and to give strength to all.
- 1 Chron 29:13 Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name.
- 1 Chron 29:14 But who am I, and who are my people, that we should have strength to offer so willingly in this way? For all things are from You, and from Your hand we have given to You.
- 1 Chron 29:15 For we are strangers before You and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days upon earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.
- 1 Chron 29:16 O Jehovah our God, as for all this abundance that we have prepared for building You a house for Your holy name, it is from Your hand, and all is Yours.
- 1 Chron 29:17 I know also, O my God, that You try the heart and take pleasure in uprightness. I, in the uprightness of my heart, have offered willingly all these things; and now I have seen with joy Your people, who are present here, offering willingly to You.
- 1 Chron 29:18 O Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of Your people's heart and establish their heart toward You.
- 1 Chron 29:19 And to Solomon my son give a wholeness of heart to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies, and Your statutes, and to do all and build the palace for which I have prepared these things.
- 1 Chron 29:20 Then David said to all the assembly, Bless Jehovah your God. And all the assembly blessed Jehovah, the God of their fathers; and they bowed down and paid homage to Jehovah and the king.
- 2 Chron 20:15 And he said, Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat. Thus says Jehovah to you, Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's.
- 2 Chron 20:16 Tomorrow go down against them. They are coming up at the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the river valley before the wilderness of Jeruel.
- 2 Chron 20:17 It is not for you to fight in this battle. Station yourselves; stand and see the salvation of Jehovah among you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid nor dismayed. Tomorrow go out to meet them, for Jehovah is with you.
- 2 Chron 20:18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before Jehovah to worship Jehovah.
- 2 Chron 20:19 And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites, rose up to praise Jehovah the God of Israel with an exceedingly loud voice.

- 2 Chron 20:20 And they rose up early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed.
- 2 Chron 20:21 And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever.
- 2 Chron 20:22 And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck.
- 2 Chron 36:22 And in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, so that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia; and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying,
- 2 Chron 36:23 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may Jehovah his God be with him, and let him go up!

I. The history of the people of Israel is a type, typifying the New Testament believers and therefore typifying the church—2 Chron. 36:22-23; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11.

- 2 Chron 36:22 And in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, so that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia; and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying,
- 2 Chron 36:23 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may Jehovah his God be with him, and let him go up!
- 1 Cor 10:6 Now these things occurred as examples to us, that we should not be ones who lust after evil things, even as they also lusted.
- 1 Cor 10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the ages have come.

II. Judah was carried away captive to Babylon because of unfaithfulness; thus, those who returned from captivity were to be faithful to God—1 Chron. 9:1; 1 Cor. 4:1-2; 7:25; 2 Tim. 2:13; Rev. 17:14:

- 1 Chron 9:1 So all Israel was enrolled by genealogy, and they are now written in the book of the kings of Israel; and Judah was carried away captive to Babylon for their unfaithfulness.
- 1 Cor 4:1 A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.
- 1 Cor 4:2 Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.
- 1 Cor 7:25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful.
- 2 Tim 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.
- Rev 17:14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and faithful, will also overcome them.
- A. God is faithful in fulfilling His economy and in leading us into His economy—Lam. 3:23b.
Lam 3:23b ... Great is Your faithfulness.
- B. As the faithful God, God cannot deny Himself; He cannot deny, go against, His own being—2 Tim. 2:13.
2 Tim 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.
- C. When He, with His attribute of faithfulness, is wrought into us, He becomes us, and we become Him in His attribute of faithfulness—1 Cor. 7:25; 2 Tim. 2:13:
1 Cor 7:25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful.

- 2 Tim 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.
1. Just as God cannot deny His own being, we, having been constituted with Him, cannot deny our own being—cf. Eph. 3:16-17.
 - Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
 - Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
 2. It is in this way that we can, and will, become faithful as stewards of the mysteries of God—1 Cor. 4:1-2.
 - 1 Cor 4:1 A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.
 - 1 Cor 4:2 Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.
 3. Because we are constituted with the faithful God, we must be faithful to Him; our being, our constitution, does not allow us to be otherwise.
- D. For us to be faithful, trustworthy, means to fulfill the stewardship that the Lord has apportioned to us—vv. 1-2; 7:25; 1 Tim. 1:12.
- 1 Cor 4:1 A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.
 - 1 Cor 4:2 Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.
 - 1 Cor 7:25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful.
 - 1 Tim 1:12 I give thanks to Him who empowers me, Christ Jesus our Lord, that He has counted me faithful, appointing me to the ministry,
- E. When the Lord comes for the battle at Armageddon, He will be the Lord of lords and the King of kings, and the overcomers who are with Him will be “the called and chosen and faithful”—Rev. 17:14; 19:11-21.
- Rev 17:14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and faithful, will also overcome them.
 - Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.
 - Rev 19:12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written which no one knows but Himself.
 - Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.
 - Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.
 - Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
 - Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
 - Rev 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come here; gather yourselves to the great dinner of God,
 - Rev 19:18 That you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of generals and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and slave and small and great.
 - Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with Him who sits on the horse and with His army.
 - Rev 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet, who in his presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone.
 - Rev 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeds out of the mouth of Him who sits on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

III. All those who returned to the good land from captivity in Babylon were commanded to know, obey, and worship Jehovah—1 Chron. 16:8-14:

- 1 Chron 16:8 Give thanks to Jehovah; call upon His name; / Make known His deeds among the peoples.
- 1 Chron 16:9 Sing to Him; sing psalms to Him; / Muse upon all His wondrous deeds.
- 1 Chron 16:10 Glory in His holy name; / Let the heart of those who seek Jehovah rejoice.
- 1 Chron 16:11 Seek Jehovah and His strength; / Seek His face continually.
- 1 Chron 16:12 Remember His wondrous deeds, which He has done, / His signs and the judgments of His mouth,
- 1 Chron 16:13 O seed of Israel His servant, / O children of Jacob, His chosen ones.
- 1 Chron 16:14 He is Jehovah our God; / His judgments are in all the earth.
- A. *God* implies God's power and His relationship with creatures; *Jehovah God* denotes God having a relationship with man.
- B. Jehovah God is not only the One who is powerful but also the One who draws near to man—Gen. 2:4, 8, 15-16, 18-19, 21-22.
- Gen 2:4 These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created. When Jehovah God made earth and heaven,
- Gen 2:8 And Jehovah God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there He put the man whom He had formed.
- Gen 2:15 And Jehovah God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it.
- Gen 2:16 And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may eat freely,
- Gen 2:18 And Jehovah God said, It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper as his counterpart.
- Gen 2:19 Now Jehovah God had formed from the ground every animal of the field and every bird of heaven. And He brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called any living animal, that was its name.
- Gen 2:21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.
- Gen 2:22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.
- C. *Jehovah* means "I am who I am," indicating that Jehovah is the self-existing and ever-existing eternal One, the One who was in the past, who is in the present, and who will be in the future forever—Exo. 3:14; Rev. 1:4.
- Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
- D. Jehovah is the only One who is—Heb. 11:6:
- Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
1. This unique One who has being is the great "To Be"; the verb *to be* can be applied only to God and not to us.
 2. God is the universal To Be, the genuine being; only God is I Am; only He has being.
- E. *Jehovah* is God's name for existence and fulfillment—Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; Exo. 3:14; 6:6-8.
- Gen 17:1 And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, Jehovah appeared to Abram and said to him, I am the All-sufficient God; / Walk before Me, and be perfect.
- Gen 28:3 And may the All-sufficient God bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples.
- Gen 35:11 And God said to him, I am the All-sufficient God: / Be fruitful and multiply; / A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, / And kings shall come forth from your loins.

- Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- Exo 6:6 Therefore say to the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.
- Exo 6:7 And I will take you to Myself as My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am Jehovah your God, the One who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.
- Exo 6:8 And I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it to you as a possession. I am Jehovah.
- F. Because Jehovah exists eternally and because He is the reality of the verb *to be*, He will fulfill whatever He has spoken—John 8:28-29.
- John 8:28 Jesus therefore said to them, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am, and that I do nothing from Myself, but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.
- John 8:29 And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.
- G. In the Lord's recovery today, we are in the stage of fulfillment; we are experiencing God as Jehovah, the great I Am—Exo. 3:14-16; John 8:24, 28.
- Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- Exo 3:15 And God also said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial from generation to generation.
- Exo 3:16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, I have surely visited you and seen what is being done to you in Egypt.
- John 8:24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins.
- John 8:28 Jesus therefore said to them, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am, and that I do nothing from Myself, but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.

IV. The returning of the children of Israel to the good land signifies the returning of Christians from division to the ground of the church, the ground of oneness—2 Chron. 36:22-23; cf. Deut. 12:1-32:

- 2 Chron 36:22 And in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, so that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia; and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying,
- 2 Chron 36:23 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may Jehovah his God be with him, and let him go up!
- Deut 12:1 These are the statutes and the ordinances that you shall be certain to do in the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.
- Deut 12:2 You shall completely destroy all the places where the nations whom you will dispossess have served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every flourishing tree.
- Deut 12:3 And you shall tear down their altars and crush their pillars; and their Asherahs you shall burn with fire, and the idols of their gods you shall cut down; and you shall destroy their name from that place.
- Deut 12:4 You shall not do so to Jehovah your God.
- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.

- Deut 12:6 And there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and your vows and your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock;
- Deut 12:7 And there you shall eat before Jehovah your God, and you and your households shall rejoice in all your undertakings, in which Jehovah your God has blessed you.
- Deut 12:8 You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each man doing all that is right in his own eyes;
- Deut 12:9 For until now you have not come to the rest and to the inheritance that Jehovah your God is giving you.
- Deut 12:10 But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which Jehovah your God is giving you as an inheritance, and when He gives you rest from all your enemies surrounding you so that you dwell securely;
- Deut 12:11 Then to the place where Jehovah your God will choose to cause His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I am commanding you, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and all your choice vows which you vow to Jehovah.
- Deut 12:12 And you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God, you and your sons and daughters, and your male servants and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no portion nor inheritance with you.
- Deut 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;
- Deut 12:14 But in the place which Jehovah will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.
- Deut 12:15 Yet you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, in all that your soul desires, according to the blessing of Jehovah your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat it as the gazelle and the deer are eaten.
- Deut 12:16 However, you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out upon the earth like water.
- Deut 12:17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or of your new wine or of your fresh oil, nor the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vows which you vow or of your freewill offerings or of the heave offering of your hand;
- Deut 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.
- Deut 12:19 Be careful that you do not forsake the Levite all your days upon the earth.
- Deut 12:20 When Jehovah your God enlarges your territory, as He has promised you, and you say, I will eat meat, because your soul desires to eat meat, you may eat meat according to all that your soul desires.
- Deut 12:21 If the place where Jehovah your God will choose to put His name is too far away from you, you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock, which Jehovah has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates according to all that your soul desires;
- Deut 12:22 Indeed, as the gazelle and the deer are eaten, so you may eat it; the unclean and the clean may eat it alike.
- Deut 12:23 But make sure that you do not eat the blood; for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh.
- Deut 12:24 You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out upon the earth like water.
- Deut 12:25 You shall not eat it, so that it may go well with you and with your children after you, when you do what is right in the sight of Jehovah.
- Deut 12:26 But you shall take your holy things which you have and your vows, and go to the place which Jehovah will choose;
- Deut 12:27 And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah your God, and you shall eat the flesh.
- Deut 12:28 Keep and listen to all these words which I am commanding you so that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of Jehovah your God.
- Deut 12:29 When Jehovah your God cuts off the nations before you, which you are entering to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land,
- Deut 12:30 Be careful that you are not ensnared in following them, after they have been destroyed before you, and that you do not seek after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods, so that I also may do likewise?

Deut 12:31 You shall not do so for Jehovah your God, for every abomination to Jehovah, which He hates, they have done to their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burned with fire to their gods.

Deut 12:32 The whole thing that I am commanding you, you shall be certain to do; you shall not add to it, nor shall you take away from it.

A. The local ground of the church is basically the unique oneness of the Body of Christ practiced in the local churches—Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27.

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

1 Cor 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

B. According to the divine revelation in the New Testament, the ground of the church is constituted of three crucial elements:

1. The first element of the constitution of the church ground is the unique oneness of the universal Body of Christ, which is called “the oneness of the Spirit” (Eph. 4:3)—the oneness for which the Lord prayed in John 17.

Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

John 17 be omitted.

2. The second element of the church ground is the unique ground of the locality in which a local church is established and exists—Rev. 1:11; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5.

Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

Acts 14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church and had prayed with fastings, they committed them to the Lord into whom they had believed.

Titus 1:5 For this cause I left you in Crete, that you might set in order the things which I have begun that remain and appoint elders in every city, as I directed you:

3. The third element of the church ground is the reality of the Spirit of oneness, that is, the reality of the Spirit, who is the living reality of the Divine Trinity—1 John 5:6; John 16:13.

1 John 5:6 This is He who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ; not in the water only, but in the water and in the blood; and the Spirit is He who testifies, because the Spirit is the reality.

John 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.

C. The ground of the church is intrinsically related to life—Psa. 133:1, 3; 36:8-9.

Psa 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is / For brothers to dwell in unity!

Psa 133:3 Like the dew of Hermon / That came down upon the mountains of Zion. / For there Jehovah commanded the blessing: / Life forever.

Psa 36:8 They are saturated with the fatness of Your house, / And You cause them to drink of the river of Your pleasures.

Psa 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; / In Your light we see light.

V. The children of Israel who returned to the good land were told to remember the covenant that God made with Abraham—1 Chron. 16:15-18; Gen. 15:7-21:

1 Chron 16:15 Remember His covenant forever, / The word that He commanded to a thousand generations,

1 Chron 16:16 The covenant that He made with Abraham, / And His oath unto Isaac.

1 Chron 16:17 And He confirmed it unto Jacob as a statute, / Unto Israel as an eternal covenant,

1 Chron 16:18 Saying, To you I will give the land of Canaan, / The portion of your inheritance;

Gen 15:7 Then He said to him, I am Jehovah who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to inherit it.

Gen 15:8 And he said, O Lord Jehovah, how will I know that I will inherit it?

Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.

Gen 15:10 And he brought Him all these and cut them in two in the middle and laid the half of each opposite the other, but the birds he did not cut in two.

Gen 15:11 And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.

Gen 15:12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, behold, a terror and great darkness fell upon him.

Gen 15:13 And He said to Abram, Know assuredly that your seed will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and they will serve them; and they will afflict them four hundred years.

Gen 15:14 But I will also judge that nation, whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with great possessions.

Gen 15:15 But as for you, you will go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried in a good old age.

Gen 15:16 And in the fourth generation they will come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.

Gen 15:17 And when the sun went down and it was dark, there came a smoking furnace and a torch of fire which passed between these pieces.

Gen 15:18 On that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, To your seed do I give this land, / From the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates:

Gen 15:19 The land of the Kenites and the Kenizzites and the Kadmonites

Gen 15:20 And the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Rephaim

Gen 15:21 And the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Girgashites and the Jebusites.

A. Abraham believed God for His promise concerning the seed, but he lacked the faith to believe God for the promise of the good land—vv. 6-8.

Gen 15:6 And he believed Jehovah, and He accounted it to him as righteousness.

Gen 15:7 Then He said to him, I am Jehovah who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to inherit it.

Gen 15:8 And he said, O Lord Jehovah, how will I know that I will inherit it?

B. In order to strengthen Abraham's faith, God was compelled to confirm His promise to Abraham by making a covenant with him—vv. 9-21:

Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.

Gen 15:10 And he brought Him all these and cut them in two in the middle and laid the half of each opposite the other, but the birds he did not cut in two.

Gen 15:11 And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.

Gen 15:12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, behold, a terror and great darkness fell upon him.

Gen 15:13 And He said to Abram, Know assuredly that your seed will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and they will serve them; and they will afflict them four hundred years.

Gen 15:14 But I will also judge that nation, whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with great possessions.

Gen 15:15 But as for you, you will go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried in a good old age.

Gen 15:16 And in the fourth generation they will come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.

Gen 15:17 And when the sun went down and it was dark, there came a smoking furnace and a torch of fire which passed between these pieces.

Gen 15:18 On that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, To your seed do I give this land, / From the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates:

Gen 15:19 The land of the Kenites and the Kenizzites and the Kadmonites

Gen 15:20 And the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Rephaim

Gen 15:21 And the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Girgashites and the Jebusites.

1. The covenant God made with Abraham was a covenant of promise that would be fulfilled through God's power in His grace—John 1:14, 17.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.

2. The new testament is a continuation of this covenant—Gal. 3:17; 4:22-26.
 - Gal 3:17 And I say this: A covenant previously ratified by God, the law, having come four hundred and thirty years after, does not annul so as to make the promise of none effect.
 - Gal 4:22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one of the maidservant and one of the free woman.
 - Gal 4:23 However the one of the maidservant was born according to the flesh, but the one of the free woman was born through promise.
 - Gal 4:24 These things are spoken allegorically, for these women are two covenants, one from Mount Sinai, bringing forth children unto slavery, which is Hagar.
 - Gal 4:25 Now this Hagar is Sinai the mountain in Arabia and corresponds to the Jerusalem which now is, for she is in slavery with her children.
 - Gal 4:26 But the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother;
- C. God made His covenant with Abraham through the crucified and resurrected Christ—Gen. 15:9; Rom. 6:5-6, 9:
- Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.
 - Rom 6:5 For if we have grown together with Him in the likeness of His death, indeed we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection,
 - Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves;
 - Rom 6:9 Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more; death lords it over Him no more.
1. The three kinds of slain cattle signify Christ in His humanity being crucified for us, and the two living birds signify Christ in His divinity being the living, resurrected One—Gen. 15:9; John 11:25; Rev. 1:18.
 - Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.
 - John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;
 - Rev 1:18 And the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades.
 2. The heifer was for a peace offering, the female goat was for a sin offering, and the ram was for a burnt offering—Gen. 15:9; Lev. 3:1; 4:28; 5:6; 1:10.
 - Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.
 - Lev 3:1 And if his offering is a sacrifice of peace offerings, if he presents it from the herd, whether male or female, he shall present it without blemish before Jehovah.
 - Lev 4:28 If his sin which he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring for his offering a female goat, without blemish, for his sin which he has committed.
 - Lev 5:6 And he shall bring his trespass offering to Jehovah for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a sheep or a goat, as a sin offering; and the priest shall make expiation for him on account of his sin.
 - Lev 1:10 And if his offering is from the flock, of the sheep or of the goats, for a burnt offering, he shall present it, a male without blemish.
 3. In typology, the turtledove signifies a suffering life, and the young pigeon signifies a believing life, a life of faith; these are two characteristics of the Lord's life on earth—Gen. 15:9.
 - Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.
 4. Since two is the number of testimony, the two living birds bear testimony of Christ as the One living in us and for us—v. 9; John 14:19-20; Gal. 2:20.
 - Gen 15:9 And He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old female goat and a three-year-old ram and a turtledove and a young pigeon.
 - John 14:19 Yet a little while and the world beholds Me no longer, but you behold Me; because I live, you also shall live.

John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.
 Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

VI. As believers in Christ, we need to have prayers that express God’s will and our desire to have our personal spiritual border to be enlarged—1 Chron. 29:10-20; 4:10:

- 1 Chron 29:10 And David blessed Jehovah in the sight of all the assembly. And David said, You are blessed, O Jehovah, God of Israel, our father, from eternity to eternity.
- 1 Chron 29:11 Yours, O Jehovah, is the greatness and the power and the splendor and the victory and the majesty, indeed all that is in heaven and on earth; Yours, O Jehovah, is the kingdom, and You are exalted as Head over all.
- 1 Chron 29:12 Both riches and glory proceed from You, and You rule over all. In Your hand are power and might, and it is in Your hand to make great and to give strength to all.
- 1 Chron 29:13 Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name.
- 1 Chron 29:14 But who am I, and who are my people, that we should have strength to offer so willingly in this way? For all things are from You, and from Your hand we have given to You.
- 1 Chron 29:15 For we are strangers before You and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days upon earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.
- 1 Chron 29:16 O Jehovah our God, as for all this abundance that we have prepared for building You a house for Your holy name, it is from Your hand, and all is Yours.
- 1 Chron 29:17 I know also, O my God, that You try the heart and take pleasure in uprightness. I, in the uprightness of my heart, have offered willingly all these things; and now I have seen with joy Your people, who are present here, offering willingly to You.
- 1 Chron 29:18 O Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of Your people's heart and establish their heart toward You.
- 1 Chron 29:19 And to Solomon my son give a wholeness of heart to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies, and Your statutes, and to do all and build the palace for which I have prepared these things.
- 1 Chron 29:20 Then David said to all the assembly, Bless Jehovah your God. And all the assembly blessed Jehovah, the God of their fathers; and they bowed down and paid homage to Jehovah and the king.
- 1 Chron 4:10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, Oh that You would richly bless me and enlarge my border, and that Your hand would be with me, and that You would so keep me from evil that it would not grieve me! And God caused what he had requested to come to pass.

A. In the universe there are three wills: the divine will, the satanic will, and the human will; God wants man’s will to be joined to Him and wants man to be one with Him so that man may express and echo His will back to Him in prayer for His good pleasure—Matt. 6:10; 7:21:

Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.
 Matt 7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens.

1. The real meaning of prayer consists of four steps:
 - a. God intends to do something according to His will—6:10.
 Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.
 - b. He reveals His will to us through the Spirit for us to know His will.
 - c. We return and echo His will back to Him through prayer—John 15:7.
 John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.
 - d. God accomplishes His work according to His will—Rev. 4:11.
 Rev 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.

2. Only prayers that are initiated by God and echo what He has initiated have any spiritual value; we must learn to pray this kind of prayer—Eph. 6:18; 1 John 5:14-16a.
 - Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
 - 1 John 5:14 And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.
 - 1 John 5:15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.
 - 1 John 5:16a If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him, to those sinning not unto death....
- B. Jabez called on God to enlarge his border; the enlarging of the border of the good land in his prayer signifies the enlarging of the border of gaining Christ and the enjoyment of Christ, who is the reality of the good land—1 Chron. 4:10; cf. Phil. 3:8-14.
 - 1 Chron 4:10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, Oh that You would richly bless me and enlarge my border, and that Your hand would be with me, and that You would so keep me from evil that it would not grieve me! And God caused what he had requested to come to pass.
 - Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
 - Phil 3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,
 - Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
 - Phil 3:11 If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.
 - Phil 3:12 Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus.
 - Phil 3:13 Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before,
 - Phil 3:14 I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.

VII. From 2 Chronicles 20:15-22 we can learn to engage in spiritual warfare by praising the Lord:

- 2 Chron 20:15 And he said, Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat. Thus says Jehovah to you, Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's.
- 2 Chron 20:16 Tomorrow go down against them. They are coming up at the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the river valley before the wilderness of Jeruel.
- 2 Chron 20:17 It is not for you to fight in this battle. Station yourselves; stand and see the salvation of Jehovah among you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid nor dismayed. Tomorrow go out to meet them, for Jehovah is with you.
- 2 Chron 20:18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before Jehovah to worship Jehovah.
- 2 Chron 20:19 And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites, rose up to praise Jehovah the God of Israel with an exceedingly loud voice.
- 2 Chron 20:20 And they rose up early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed.
- 2 Chron 20:21 And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever.
- 2 Chron 20:22 And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck.

- A. In 2 Chronicles 20:15 Jehovah said to King Jehoshaphat, “Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God’s,” and in verse 17a, “It is not for you to fight in this battle”:
1. Many of the serving ones praised Jehovah the God of Israel with an exceedingly loud voice—v. 19.
2 Chron 20:19 And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites, rose up to praise Jehovah the God of Israel with an exceedingly loud voice.
 2. When they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the enemies, and they were struck—v. 22.
2 Chron 20:22 And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck.
- B. Praise is the highest work carried out by God’s children—Psa. 119:164; Heb. 13:15:
Psa 119:164 Seven times a day I praise You / For Your righteous ordinances.
Heb 13:15 Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name.
1. The highest expression of a saint’s spiritual life is his praise to God—Psa. 146:2; Heb. 13:15; Rev. 5:9-13; 19:1-6:
Psa 146:2 I will praise Jehovah while I live; / I will sing psalms to my God while I yet have being.
Heb 13:15 Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name.
Rev 5:9 And they sing a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain and have purchased for God by Your blood men out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
Rev 5:10 And have made them a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign on the earth.
Rev 5:11 And I saw, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and of the living creatures and of the elders, and their number was ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands,
Rev 5:12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb who has been slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.
Rev 5:13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea and all things in them, I heard saying, To Him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever.
Rev 19:1 After these things I heard as it were a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the power are of our God.
Rev 19:2 For true and righteous are His judgments; for He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and He avenged the blood of His slaves at her hand.
Rev 19:3 And a second time they said, Hallelujah! And her smoke goes up forever and ever.
Rev 19:4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God, who sits upon the throne, saying, Amen, Hallelujah!
Rev 19:5 And a voice came out from the throne, saying, Praise our God, all His slaves and those who fear Him, the small and the great.
Rev 19:6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.
 - a. The Christian life soars through praise—Acts 16:19-34.
Acts 16:19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit had gone out, they laid hold of Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers.
Acts 16:20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, These men, being Jews, are throwing our city into confusion,

Acts 16:21 And they are announcing customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to accept or do.

Acts 16:22 And the crowd rose up together against them, and the magistrates tore off their garments and ordered some to beat them with rods.

Acts 16:23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them securely,

Acts 16:24 Who, having received such a charge, threw them into the inner prison and secured their feet in the stocks.

Acts 16:25 And about midnight Paul and Silas, while praying, sang hymns of praise to God; and the prisoners were listening to them.

Acts 16:26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken. And instantly all the doors were opened and everyone's bonds were unfastened.

Acts 16:27 And the jailer, waking up out of his sleep and seeing the doors of the prison opened, drew his sword and was about to do away with himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

Acts 16:28 But Paul called out with a loud voice, saying, Do no harm to yourself, for we are all here.

Acts 16:29 And the jailer asked for lights and rushed in; and trembling, he fell down before Paul and Silas.

Acts 16:30 And leading them outside, he said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.

Acts 16:32 And they spoke the word of God to him together with all those in his house.

Acts 16:33 And he took them with him in that very hour of the night and washed their wounds. And he was baptized immediately, he and all his household.

Acts 16:34 And he brought them up into his house and set a table before them; and he exulted because he had believed in God with all his household.

b. To praise is to transcend everything to touch the Lord—Rev. 14:1-3; 15:2-4.

Rev 14:1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.

Rev 14:2 And I heard a voice out of heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harp-singers playing on their harps.

Rev 14:3 And they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the hundred and forty-four thousand, who have been purchased from the earth.

Rev 15:2 And I saw as it were a glassy sea mingled with fire and those who come away victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name standing on the glassy sea, having harps of God.

Rev 15:3 And they sing the song of Moses, the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and wonderful are Your works, Lord God the Almighty! Righteous and true are Your ways, O King of the nations!

Rev 15:4 Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; for all the nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous judgments have been manifested.

2. Spiritual victory does not depend on warfare—it depends on praise—2 Chron. 20:20-22.

2 Chron 20:20 And they rose up early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed.

2 Chron 20:21 And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever.

2 Chron 20:22 And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck.

- C. In the church life and in our personal life, we need to offer consummate praise to God—Psa. 22:22b; Heb. 2:12b.
Psa 22:22b ... In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.
Heb 2:12b ... in the midst of the church I will sing hymns of praise to You."
- D. Through the Christ whom we have experienced and enjoyed, we need to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually—13:15.
Heb 13:15 Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name.
- E. "I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart; / And I will glorify Your name forever"—Psa. 86:12.